

REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration of the rejections contained in the Office Action of November 20, 2003 is respectfully requested.

The Examiner has noted that only the marked-up copy of the original specification and abstract was enclosed with the Amendment filed August 11, 2003, but no "clean" copy of the substitute specification and abstract was received. Consequently, a new clean copy of the substitute specification and abstract has been submitted herewith as requested by the Examiner.

Claims 18-40 are presently pending in this application. In the Office Action, the Examiner has rejected claims 18, 21, 29, and 31-40 as being unpatentable over the Tamura reference (GB 2,245,158) in view of the Röck '726 reference (USP 4,445,726); and has rejected claims 19, 20, and 30 as being unpatentable over the Tamura reference, the Röck '726, and further in view of the Migliori reference (EP 556,613). In this regard, it is noted that the Examiner did not set forth any prior art rejections of claims 22-28. Nonetheless, independent claim 18 has now been amended as indicated above. For the reasons discussed below, it is respectfully submitted that amended claims 18-40 are now clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

The Examiner is requested to note that independent claim 18 has been amended to now recite that the damping device is operable to dampen a relative motion between *the center track and at least one of the drawer track and the support track*. In other words, the damping device is operable to dampen a relative motion between the center track and the drawer track and/or a relative motion between the center track and the support track.

The Tamura reference discloses a mechanism for controlling the travel of a structural member, including a drawer track 7, a support track 3, and rolling elements arranged between the tracks. The Examiner asserts that the Tamura reference also discloses a dampening device including a rotary damper component, but acknowledges that the Tamura reference does not disclose a center track arranged between the drawer track and the support track. Thus, it is submitted that the Tamura reference also does not disclose or suggest that the damping device is operable to dampen a relative motion *between the center track and at least one of the drawer track and the support track*.

The Röck '726 reference discloses a drawer rail, a support rail, and a center rail between the drawer rail and the support rail. However, as explained in the Amendment filed August 11, 2003, the Röck '726 reference does not disclose or even suggest a damping device as recited in claim 18. Consequently, the Röck reference also does not disclose or even suggest a damping device *operable to dampen a relative motion between the center track and at least one of the drawer track and the support track.*

As explained above, the Examiner asserts that the Tamura reference discloses a dampening device. However, because the Tamura reference only discloses a drawer track 7 and a support track 3, the dampening device must necessarily operate to dampen a relative motion only between the drawer track and the support track. This reference provides no suggestion of arranging a damping device as recited in amended independent claim 18. Furthermore, as explained above, the Röck reference does not disclose the use of *any* damping device and, therefore, certainly does not suggest a damping device arranged as recited in amended independent claim 18, either. Therefore, it is submitted that even the *combination* of the Tamura reference and the Röck reference does not even suggest a damping device arranged as recited in amended independent claim 18. Consequently, one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated by the Röck reference to modify the Tamura reference or to combine the references so as to obtain the invention recited in amended independent claim 18.

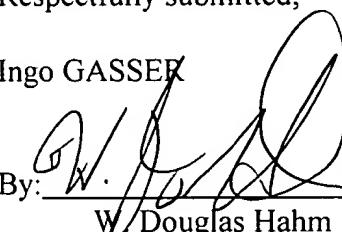
The Migliori reference discloses a rack and pinion pneumatic actuator, but also does not disclose or even suggest a center track arranged between a drawer track and a support track, and a damping device that is operable to dampen a relative motion between a center track and at least one of the drawer track and the support track. Therefore, it is submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art would not be motivated by the Migliori reference to modify the Tamura reference and the Röck '726 reference so as to obtain the invention recited in amended independent claim 18. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 18 and the claims that depend therefrom are clearly patentable over the prior art of record.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance. However, if the Examiner should have any comments or suggestions to help speed the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicant's undersigned representative.

Respectfully submitted,

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